

ECB Guidance on Appointing and Training a Club Welfare Officer (Club WOs)

It is a mandatory requirement that every ECB affiliated club must recruit, identify, appoint and train a Club Welfare Officer.

This is essential for 2 main reasons: a) in order to provide a “first point of contact” for everyone within the club and the ECB for safeguarding and child protection matters, and b) to ensure that the club is adopting and implementing the various safeguarding activities which are necessary for it to demonstrate its duty of care for children.

When appointing a new Club WO, Clubs must also refer to the ECB Point of Policy regarding recruiting individuals who work with children as well as the guidance notes on the recruitment and appointment of volunteers / staff found elsewhere in this Kit Bag.

Recommended Process

1. The Club Chairman must personally ensure that the Club WO is screened through the ECB’s Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Process. The Club Chairman must ensure that they hold a SDF form completed by the prospective Club WO, retaining this until such time as the Club WO’s CRB Disclosure outcome status is issued by the ECB.
2. Written references on the prospective Club WO (which are required in accordance with the ECB appointment and recruitment guidelines) need to be taken up by the Club Chairman, and any concerns raised by those providing the reference should be referred by the Chairman directly to the County Welfare Officer.
3. The name and contact details for the appointed Club WO must be communicated to your County Welfare Officer, and County Cricket Board Office.
4. Once the Club WO has been appointed, they must then attend training in accordance with the details shown under the heading of “Training” below. Once they are trained, where possible the Club should display the Club WO’s TTL and SPC certificates on the Club Notice board.
5. The Club WO’s name and contact details need to be made known to Club members, and other persons associated with the club, and these should also be displayed on the Club Notice board.

Who should be a Club WO?

The Club WO should be selected as the most appropriate person for the role not because they are the only applicant.

NB the majority of clubs have as members (or members partners / parents or associates), people who in their professional lives have experience of child protection policies and procedures.

Where possible, the person selected for the role of Club WO should not be someone who already has a high profile role within the club.

The person selected for the role of Club WO must be able to:

- satisfy the requirements of the core skills and knowledge areas,
- be prepared to complete the core tasks, and
- be prepared to undergo the training required.

The above is the ideal scenario for appointing a Club WO and the ECB understands the problems clubs may face in securing volunteers to perform such a role. However the importance of selecting the right person cannot be over-stated. The person selected may well be privy to some of the most private aspects of club members lives and must show that they are able and experienced to handle confidential matters.

Role Description – Club Welfare Officer

Core Tasks

- Promote good practice in safeguarding and protecting children in their club, working with the coaching teams, club committee and club members to create a child centred environment and develop a proactive safeguarding culture within the club.
- To help safeguard and protect children by assisting in the promotion and implementation of the Safeguarding Children

Policy at a Club level.

- To be the first point of contact for all club safeguarding and child protection issues
- To act as a source of advice on current best practice and provide support to the Club Management Committee and the members of that Club on safeguarding issues and procedures.
- To attend Club Management Committee meetings as a member of the club management committee by right of the role (not through combining roles of established positions) and ensure that safeguarding is a mandatory standing item on the committee agenda.
- To advise the Management committee in establishing which roles within the club require the post holder to undertake the ECB CRB Disclosure Process, ensuring that such CRB applications and any necessary self-declaration forms are completed
- To maintain accurate records and to keep all documentation in a secure fashion.
- To ensure matters of a possible child protection nature are reported / referred appropriately to the ECB and/or statutory authorities in a timely fashion, and in accordance with ECB procedures.

Core Areas of Knowledge

- To be aware of the ECB process for reporting incidents to the ECB and the statutory agencies
- To have a basic knowledge of the different forms of abuse that can occur within and outside of sport which are harmful to children.
- To have a basic understanding of the statutory agencies and their role in safeguarding and child protection.

- To be aware of ECB safeguarding policies and procedures as set out in “Safe Hands”

Core Skills

- Have experience of safeguarding and child protection either at work or other volunteering e.g. teacher, social worker, police officer, charity organiser.
- Have excellent communication skills, including the ability to advocate the benefits of safeguarding
- Be able to collate and administrate paperwork and information received in a confidential and secure manner.
- Have empathy with children

Training the Club Welfare Officer

The ECB requires all Club WOs to attend the following training to support and equip them for the role:

- A “Safeguarding and Protecting Children” (SPC) Workshop every three years. This workshop was previously named “Good Practice and Child Protection”(GPCP) until December 2006. (To avoid any possible confusion, it should be noted that Club WOs who have already attended the GPCP course in the last 3 years do not need to attend the SPC course until their GPCP course certificate “expires”)

- A “Time to Listen” (TtL) Workshop every three years. Before attending the TtL course, any trainee Club WO must have been CRB checked and attended a safeguarding course such as SPC.

Undertaking appropriate training will enable the Club WO to:

- Recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice
- Recognise signs of possible abuse
- Report any suspected poor practice / concerns of possible abuse
- Understand how to manage disclosures from a child
- Ensure that they fulfil their role within the duty of care for children
- Provide guidance to the club in relation creating and implementing policies

